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Books of The Times

A Senator Speaks on Points of Order

By CHARLES POORE

PROSPECTS FOR THE WEST. By J. William Fulbright. 132 pages. Harvard. \$3.25.

A DISENCHANTED friend of mine often says that life is a tough fight with a short stick. Hear now Senator Fulbright on the wildly compartmentalized future in store for the townsman:

"It has been suggested," he darkly says, "that the pressures of urban living will lead to a daily life divided into four distinct six-hour periods.

"Six hours a day will be spent in our automobiles—three in the morning going to work and three in the evening going home. Another six hours will be spent on the job, watching automated machines do the work, and perhaps the thinking, that formerly was done by men.

"The third six-hour period will be spent watching television, leaving us six hours for the rest of life, including sleep.

"The daytime schedule," he adds in a burst of what I can only call apothecary mercy, "will of course require an adequate supply of tranquilizers, and sleeping pills will be required at night."

Are there flaws in that prophecy? Certainly. It is very doubtful, for example, that machines are going to take much of their six automated hours doing the thinking now done by men. Once the standardized contrasting attitudes are computed accurately, things should snap along.

Decisions will cascade out of the little mechanical monsters, and discursive decades now spent in acrimonious debate on slum clearance, the future of the United Nations, ways of handling sea water, how to retard the population explosion, keeping sleeve-ends out of trousers food while eating in an airplane, and deciding what Russia will probably do next, will all be compressed into an appealing and unanswerable click-clack-click that we'll lose the perilous luxuries of participation.

Senator Fulbright is a believer in halting haste slowly. He is a Rhodes scholar of Oxford, home of lost causes, political loyalties and Professor Rowan. He recently got around to doing his sonnets. As president of the University of Arkansas, Mr. Fulbright has written and paradoxes of the United States in America. As a former editor of the League Banking and Currency Committee, he has written a book on the subject. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, he has written a book on the subject.



The New York Times
Senator Fulbright

Although his new book, "Prospects for the West," sets forth bold programs for international affairs, it is quite regional in some of its outlooks on domestic matters. He naturally wants a world of freedom, but he says: "If the problem of race relations is ever to be resolved in America—and I believe it will—its resolution will come along by slow conversion of the human heart through the healing processes of education and not by remedies of a more urgent nature."

Yet "remedies of a more urgent nature" do have their places in the crucial confrontations of our time as Senator Fulbright surveys them here. The Russians' threat in Cuba a year ago was not exactly left to "slow conversion of the human heart." Instead, as Senator Fulbright says, they spectacularly found out that their bid carried with it "unacceptable risks."

Senator Fulbright sometimes seems in these lectures to be coasting along on mechanized tracks of thought. There is copious truth in what he says. The trouble is that—since we are already aware of our manifold sins and wickednesses—we are only roused fitfully, if at all, when his words lull us with droning familiarity. . . . "We have fallen into a state of benign satisfaction with affluence. . . . Prosperity appears to have benumbed the social conscience which brought us the benefits we now enjoy. . . . In our absorption with the pleasures of shiny new cars, of a thousand gadgets of trivial utility . . . we . . ."

Will the Senator yield the floor? Yes. In time. And, in time, while he is still holding it, he gets into the record many enlightening ideas for improving the state of the nation and estimating the nation's place in the world.

End Papers

BERLIN: SUCCESS OF A MISSION! By Geoffrey McDermott. 147 pages. Harper & Row. \$3.95.

This valuable little book was written by the former British Minister in Berlin who learned that it was not wise to have unconventional ideas if one desired to survive in Her Majesty's Foreign Service. According to Mr. McDermott's fascinating tale the stiletto is stuck into one's back by Lord Home's benign subordinates. But this report is the less important of the two reasons for reading the book. The more important one is that it takes new ground in Western thinking about Berlin in particular and the cold war in general.

Mr. McDermott's thesis is that it is long past time that the Berlin issue be settled the only way it can ever be settled: on mutually satisfactory to Moscow and the West. To do this he urges the institution of what might be called Three Germanies: West Germany, East Germany, and a third Germany of the United Nations for the city of Berlin generally.

It is a stimulating, controversial book. It is not a book to be read with the mind set off hard thinking by those who believe that a changing world is

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